

CHINKAPIN OAK

Quercus mublenbergii Engelm.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Chestnut oak, Rock chestnut oak, Rock oak, Yellow chestnut oak, Yellow oak.

FORM: 80-100, occasionally 160 feet high, with tall straight trunk 3-4 feet in diameter, with comparatively small branches forming a narrow round-topped head.

BARK: Rarely over 1/2 inch thick, broken on the surface into thin loose silvery-white scales sometimes tinged with brown.

TWIGS Light orange color or reddish-brown during first winter, ultimately gray or brown.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, usually crowded at the ends of the branches, oblong-lanceolate to broadly obovate, acute or acuminate with a long narrow or with a short broad point, abruptly or gradually narrowed and rounded or cordate at base, equally serrate with acute and often incurved or broad and rounded teeth tipped with small glandular mucros, at maturity thick and firm, light yellow-green above, often silvery-white and finely pubescent below, 4-7 inches long, 1-5 inches wide.

FLOWERS: Monoecious; staminate in interrupted filiform aments 3-4 inches long, yellow anthers, notched; pistillate flowers clustered, sessile or pedunculate, styles, 3, bright red.

FRUIT: Matures the first season; nut ovoid, narrowed and rounded at apex, 1/2 to nearly 1 inch long, light chestnut-brown, about half of its length enclosed in a thin cup-shaped, light brown cup, hairy tomentose on its inner surface.

WINTER BUDS: Ovoid, acute, 1/8-1/4 inch long, with chestnut-brown scales white and scarious on the margins.

WOOD: Heavy, very hard. strong, close-grained, with thin light-colored sapwood

USES: Lumber, barrel staves, railroad ties, pulp. Historical uses: Wheel spokes, fencing.

HABITAT Dry hillsides, prefers dry limestone ridges, reaches best development on rich bottom land.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Oblong leaves, coarsely and regularly serrate except at the base; bole often buttressed below; mature bark, gray or nearly white, thin and shallowly fissured.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Mostly on limestone outcroppings, limestone slopes and on shady ridges and bluffs. Reported from Winston, Cullman, Fayette, Walker, Tuscaloosa, Jefferson, Blount, Sumter, Hale, Autauga, Wilcox, Clarke, and Houston Counties.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

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| 1. A flowering branch | 6. A leaf |
| 2. A staminate flower | 7. A leaf |
| 3. A pistillate flower | 8. A winter branchlet |
| 4. A fruiting branch | 9. An auxillary winter bud |
| 5. A fruit | |



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